

Making Sense of Our Sites



UK UNESCO World Heritage Youth Summit – 1 October 2010

On 1st October 2010 over 45 young people came together at New Lanark World Heritage Site (WHS) in South Lanarkshire for the first UK UNESCO World Heritage Youth Summit in Scotland. The event which was organised by the UK National Commission for UNESCO and sponsored by Historic Scotland, was an opportunity for young people in Scotland to explore what World Heritage means to them and develop ideas for how World Heritage Sites can better engage with young people.

Youth delegations representing all five World Heritage Sites in Scotland; Antonine Wall (represented by Bellahouston Academy), Heart of Neolithic Orkney (represented by Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy), New Lanark (represented by Lanark Grammar School), Old and New Towns of Edinburgh (represented by St Thomas of Aquin's High School) and St Kilda (represented by Sir Edward Scott School), were joined by a delegation from the Berkeley

Institute representing the Historic Town of St George World Heritage Site in Bermuda, a British overseas territory. The young people worked in groups to explore global challenges to World Heritage Sites, questioned World Heritage experts through 'speed interviews' and took part in a Dragon's Den style exercise to find the most innovative recommendation for how World Heritage Sites in Scotland can better engage young people through education and outreach.

The Youth Summit formed part of the **Making Sense of Our Sites** initiative from the UK National Commission for UNESCO which aims to support UK World Heritage Sites in communicating key messages on World Heritage effectively to schools and young people. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention recognises the importance of educating young people as the future custodians of our World Heritage Sites. Enabling young people to engage with their local World Heritage will help protect and preserve these unique sites for future generations.

Young World Heritage Ambassadors

All participants reported that their knowledge and understanding of World Heritage Sites and the challenges they face had improved as a result of taking part in the Youth Summit. The young people also said that their presentation skills had improved and that they felt more confident working together in groups and meeting new people.



"I thoroughly enjoyed the ability to use our ideas to improve our sites"

Feedback from youth delegates:



"This was really good. I enjoyed it and learned loads"



"The presentations were great"



"The activities were fun and creative - this is a great experience"



"I liked working in groups with people I've never met before"



World Heritage Education in action

The teachers accompanying the students to the event saw the Youth Summit as a great opportunity for young people to be ambassadors for their sites and promote their own heritage in a new environment. Teachers noted that the event was an opportunity for students to broaden their global outlook and to learn about and appreciate other World Heritage Sites. All participating teachers underlined that they would continue to teach about World Heritage in their schools and that the preparation materials for the Youth Summit had proved very useful.

Feedback from participating teachers:

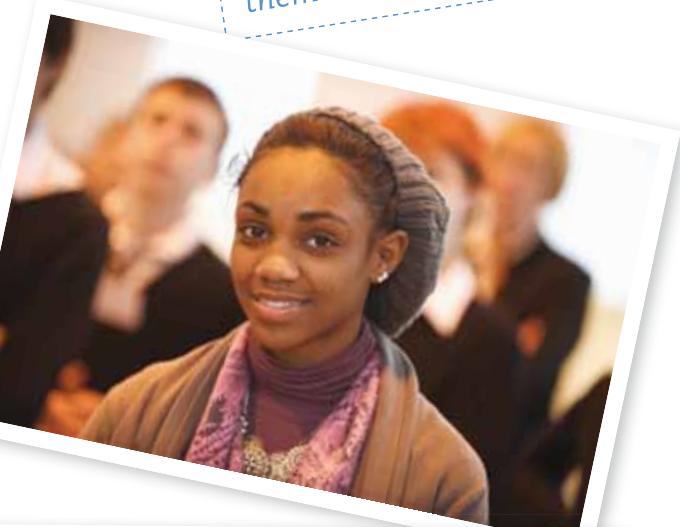
“This is what the Curriculum for Excellence is all about – active learning and development of new skills. All the creative ideas for the presentation came from the students themselves. The teamwork was fantastic.”



“Preparing for the Youth Summit has made us think about our own culture and environment and why and how the unique qualities of St Kilda should be preserved for present and future young people to enjoy.”



“The students have shown a real interest in their heritage, have gained confidence and have enjoyed working together. They also learned new skills in filmmaking when preparing their presentation.”



Asked to sum up their World Heritage Site in just **one word** the delegations' suggestions clearly showed how they had been inspired by learning about their local World Heritage Site:

Antonine Wall: HIDDEN

Heart of Neolithic Orkney: ICONIC

Historic Town of St George, Bermuda: UNIQUE

New Lanark: INSPIRING

Old and New Towns of Edinburgh: MAGICAL

St Kilda: REMOTE



Involving Young People in World Heritage

The Dragons' Den activity where students were asked to develop proposal for activities that World Heritage Sites could use to better engage young people proved very successful.

The winning proposal was developed by students from **Bellahouston Academy**, representing the Antonine World Heritage Site. They suggested launching **Route AD 180 – a branded bus taking tourist and school students along the Antonine Wall and the introduction of a mobile phone application with content developed by local students to help visitors learn about the Roman history of the site.** The proposal was deemed the most innovative by the Dragons' because of its combination of sustainable modes of transport and student-developed visitor information using new technology.



There were also a number of other exciting proposals, including:

Bellahouston Academy (Antonine Wall WHS)

- Make Scottish World Heritage Sites part of the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland

Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy (Heart of Neolithic Orkney WHS)

- Brodgar Rock – a rock concert at the Heart of Neolithic Orkney to provide an entertainment offer for young people on the islands and showcase local bands in the stunning surroundings of the stone circles at Brodgar at sunset

Berkeley Institute (Historic Town of St George WHS)

- St George's Guides – a volunteer scheme for young historic guides to St George, providing a skills-based and hands-on programme for gap year students
- Make World Heritage Sites part of the curriculum for Bermuda and introduce a mandatory course on World Heritage for high school students

Lanark Grammar School (New Lanark WHS)

- Create a 3D walk through New Lanark's past
- Launch a laser extravaganza at the Falls of Clyde

St Thomas of Aquin's High School (Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS)

- Look Up – an advertisement campaign on city buses to encourage tourists and local people to notice the architecture and heritage of the city
- Experience one day in the life of a historic character
- Treasure hunt along the Royal Mile which combines an entertaining competition with learning about the World Heritage Site

Sir Edward Scott School (St Kilda WHS)

- Castaway on St Kilda – participants spend three months on St Kilda living a traditional islander life
- The Great Climb – create a replica of the cliffs of St Kilda on Isle of Harris to enable tourist to climb the cliff and experience St Kilda without damaging the fragile environment on the island
- Start a local boat business to take visitors to St Kilda